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PRESS RELEASE

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Jury Convicts Two Men of Armed Robbery, Other Charges In Brazen Attack in Northeast Washington - Numerous Shots Fired, Five Victims Accosted -

WASHINGTON - Darrell Wilson, 29, and McKinley Johnson, 23, also known as Rico Johnson, have been convicted of armed robbery and other charges in a brazen robbery that took place in May 2010 in Northeast Washington, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced today.

Wilson, of Washington, D.C., and Johnson, of Oxon Hill, Md., were convicted February 17, 2011 by a jury in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia of multiple counts of armed robbery, assault with intent to rob while armed, assault with a dangerous weapon, and various weapons offenses. The jury also convicted Wilson of a felony charge of escape and failure to appear to court.

The Honorable Judge Lynn Leibovitz scheduled sentencing of the defendants for April 29, 2011. Each faces a minimum of 20 years in prison.

According to the government's evidence, four men and one female were standing in front of a house near the 1200 block of 16th Street NE, in the city's Trinidad neighborhood, early in the morning of Mother's Day 2010, when they were approached by two men armed with guns.

Shots were fired in the air, and the gunmen told the victims, "This is a robbery, get down on the ground!" All five victims got down on their stomachs and complied.

Wilson and Johnson then went through the victims' pockets, taking their valuables. The gunmen took several wallets, cash, cellular phones and other items. During the course of the robbery, 19 shots were fired in the air to warn the victims to comply with the suspects' instructions. One of the victims suffered a wound to her head from being hit with a "heavy object." Her injuries required hospitalization. Two other victims were also physically assaulted by the robbers, as well.

Units from the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) heard the gunfire, and quickly moved into the area and observed the suspects fleeing on foot. The victims were all still face down on the ground motionless, leading one officer to momentarily believe that they all had been shot.

The police stopped Wilson as he tried to flee the scene, and found the gun he had used during the robbery in his flight path. Police also found stolen items in the vicinity of where they caught him.

Police saw Johnson toss a handgun during their pursuit. Police recovered that gun as well as a gun clip for the gun. In addition, Johnson was caught with property stolen in the robbery.

Both defendants inexplicably had large amounts of cash with them. The robbery victims identified the objects found on the men as the items stolen from them during the robbery. Police also found 19 shell casings at the crime scene. Thirteen were from Wilson's 9 mm handgun and six were from Johnson's .45 caliber handgun.

In announcing the jury's verdict, U.S. Attorney Machen commended lead MPD Detective Randal Parker, of the Fifth District, and patrol officers Abraham Lazarus, Carlos Heraud, and Fabian Ferrera who were the first officers on the scene and who apprehended the defendants. Additionally, Mr. Machen commended Detectives Charles Fultz and William Talbert of the Fifth District and MPD Crime Scene Search Technician Ninotchka Sylvester for their outstanding work.

Mr. Machen also expressed his appreciation to those who worked on the case from the U.S. Attorney's Office, including Paralegal Kalisha Johnson-Clark, and trial team members Jennifer Clark, Debra Cannon, Paul Howell, William Henderson, Leif Hickling, and Shawn Slade. Finally, U.S. Attorney Machen commended the outstanding efforts of Assistant U.S. Attorney Terry Eaton, who investigated and tried the case.

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